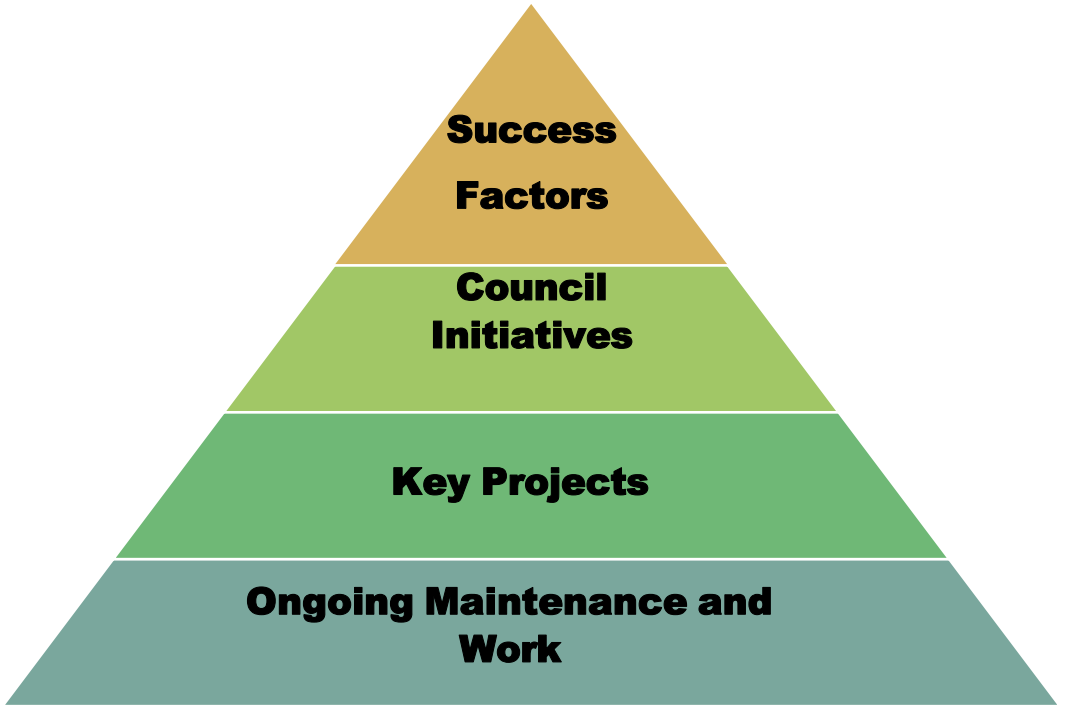
2026 Strategic Plan



City Council established the City's **Success Factors** in 2020:

- Active, Connected and Sustainable
- Affordable and Thriving
- Safe, Inclusive and Engaged
- Respected and Relational Governance
- Quality Services

These factors were identified as the qualities that embody City Council's vision for Golden. These factors guide the work and planning that staff does daily to realize that vision. Annually, City Council establishes its **Council Initiatives** that fit under the **Success Factor** categories. The Initiatives are projects that Council is closely tracking that are essential to executing its vision, and that typically require or lead to big picture policy-making decisions. Equally important are **Key Projects,** projects that rise to a high level of visibility and are beyond what staff identifies as **Ongoing Maintenance and Work** that is completed routinely by city staff. The **Success Factors, Council Initiatives,** and **Key Projects** help the Community, City Council, and Staff track, manage, and communicate about important city efforts and if needed, adjust priorities in a clear and open way. As this strategic plan evolves, we hope to improve its visibility and functionality for Council, staff, and the public.

2026 Council Initiatives Council Initiatives fit under the Success Factor categories identified by color. The Initiatives are projects that Council is closely tracking that are essential to executing its vision, and that typically require or lead to big picture policy-making decisions.	**Timeline for Decision Points**	**Staff Leads**
Highway 93 North Alternatives Design		
Review of the Golden Plan with opportunity to update the plan with new conceptual designs (up to 30% design). Scope looks at Hwy 93 from Hwy 58 intersection north to City limits (including new Junction annexation). Included in this effort is an eye to fundable projects that could be implemented incrementally. Contract awarded in Q4 2025. 18–24-month design effort with many opportunities for public input.	Q3 2027	Anne Beierle
Comprehensive Plan Update		
Modernize the plan to reflect changes since the 2017 update, such as the form-based approach to zoning, TMP and Bike/Ped Plan goals, REDI goals, affordable housing, and policy direction.	Q1 2026	Matt Wempe
Federal Policy Impacts and Adaptation		
Monitor and adapt City capital project priorities and programs, as Federal policy and funding changes may impact current and anticipated Federal and State funding, along with the overall economic conditions that drive project costs. The City of Golden avoided significant impacts in 2025 due to Federal policy changes; however, we will continue to monitor as court rulings and policy implementation continue in 2026.	Q1 2026 - Ongoing	Scott Vargo
Enhance Community Engagement Program		
Update Community Engagement Guide in Q1 redefining and formalizing of processes and community expectations. Evaluate the new progress by Q4.	Q1 2026	Meredith Ritchie
Funding Housing for All		
Continue to seek and identify opportunities for sustainable funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Continue to track additional funding opportunities for partners through Prop 123.	Q4 2026 Ongoing	Lauren McKinney
Regional Homelessness Projects		
Support efforts in Jefferson County and beyond to expand services at regional navigation centers and identify increased opportunities for long-term emergency shelter. Collaborate on funding opportunities for the region. Continue work on longer-term solutions for regional homelessness, as well as regional collaboration on severe and extreme weather sheltering for people experiencing homelessness.	Q4 2026 Ongoing	Sarah Vaine

Wildfire Management & Resiliency Planning Strategy		
Develop a comprehensive wildfire resilience strategy that unites department-specific efforts related to wildland fire risk management, community preparedness for emergency power shutoffs, and City resiliency to other emergencies. This Initiative is strongly linked to the following key projects and is part of many of our ongoing operational activities: • Forrest Canopy Study (15a) • Sustainability Policies and Grants (2a) • Beverly Heights Emergency Egress Route Development (3d) • Implementation of Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Action Plan (3e) • Adopt Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code (8e) • Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update (14e)	Q4 2026	Anne Beierle Jeremy Sweat Kasey Beal
Corridor Projects: Heart of Golden		
The **Heart of Golden** is a coordinated, multi-year initiative focused on improving civic spaces, parks, trails, and City facilities along the Clear Creek corridor. Projects are organized into the following focus areas to make progress easy to track and understand. **Civic Infrastructure** • Police & Municipal Building (5e) **Civic Spaces & Placemaking** • Central Zone (Current City Hall Site) (12a) • East Amenity Zone (9a) **Redevelopment & Property Strategy** • East Zone Property Redevelopment or Disposition Strategy (13a) **Parks & Open Space Improvements** • Lions Park & Playground Renewal (8a) **Trails & Connectivity** • Clear Creek South Trail Improvements (10a) • Community Center Pedestrian Connections (8th–10th Street, West of GCC) (11a)	Q2 2028 Ongoing	Carly Lorentz Steve Glueck

 = Ongoing Projects  = New Projects

Active, Connected and Sustainable

Golden thoughtfully plans to create comprehensive, connected infrastructure, services, amenities and preserve a beautiful community existing in harmony with the natural environment.

	Strategic Action	Project Manager	Decision Point Timeframe	Key Contributors and Details
1a	Complete Colfax Corridor Construction	Joe Puhr	Q4 2027	Corridor improvements between I-70 and Violet Street. Coordination with adjacent Lena Gulch project is ongoing. Construction of the first phase, a roundabout at Colfax and Heritage, will begin in 2026.
2a	Sustainability Policies and Grant Requests	Theresa Worsham	Q2 2026	Pending grant awards, Staff and CSAB will forward recommendations for several new initiatives, including a Universal Recycling Ordinance, Commercial Energy Benchmarking Policy, and Downtown Waste Collection District.
3a	Conversion of All Streetlights to LED Lights	Anne Beierle	Q2 2026	Lights for downtown streetlights have been ordered and will arrive in February. Install will take place as soon as they arrive and should be completed by May 2026.
4a	Fast DC electric vehicle charger installation	Theresa Worsham	Q4 2026	Grant applications for fast charges for fleet and for public use are currently in consideration by the State with decisions by end of January 2026 and potential projects starting in July 2026.
5a	Wayfinding signage	Grace Fleming	Q1 2024 -Q4 2026	Two year phased project to add signage for public parking, downtown Golden, trails, and bike network. Work in 2026 will focus on parking and downtown wayfinding in collaboration with the City's rebranding effort and Mines parking and wayfinding signage.
6a	Transportation Demand Management & Clayworks Impact Strategies	Matt Wempe	Q4 2025-Q4 2026	Implement voluntary programs and supportive infrastructure that will help reduce congestion and parking demand in downtown and along the 17-bus route, and work in concert with Clayworks on further TDM strategies. Assess potential impacts of the Clayworks development on downtown businesses and devise strategies to integrate downtown and the Clayworks area to proactively

				mitigate those potential impacts. Develop an overall TDM plan for adoption in Q2 2026 and then begin to implement TDM programs from the plan.
7a	Continue expansion and improvement of Ore Cart	Matt Wempe	Q3 2025-Q4 2026	Monitor new Sunday service and work with Mines to make any needed adjustments to the system. Federal grant money in 2026 will allow a further pilot program, with goal of testing a service option in South Golden.
8a	Lions Park & Playground Renewal: Heart of Golden Project	Rheana Rogers	Q1 2025-Q4 2026	One of the Heart of Golden corridor projects, design for the new playground and other park amenity improvements will occur through 2026 with construction anticipated to begin late 2026.
9a	East Amenity Zone: Heart of Golden Project	Steve Glueck	Q1 2027	One of the Heart of Golden corridor projects, concept design for the area is in 2025 with construction plan preparation to begin in 2026 and construction anticipated to begin in 2027.
10a	Clear Creek South Trail Improvements: Heart of Golden Project	Matt Wempe	Q4 2026	One of the Heart of Golden corridor projects, design for trail widening improvements along south side of Clear Creek between Illinois Street and Ford Street to better accommodate cyclist route as part of Peaks 2 Plains trail implementation. Construction may be limited in 2026 and focus on the area around Golden Hotel which is rebuilding their patio adjacent to the trail. Other construction is funding dependent and City staff are working to identify grant opportunities.
11a	Community Center Pedestrian Connections (8th–10th Street West of GCC): Heart of Golden Project	Anne Beierle	Q4 2027	One of the Heart of Golden corridor projects. Design two pedestrian connections between 8th and 10th Street on either side of the Community Center. Work with GURA to assist with construction funding. Construction is planned for 2027.
12a	Central Zone: Heart of Golden Project	Carly Lorentz, Steve Glueck	Q2 2026 – Q3 2028	Community Engagement and Council policy direction re future use and design of current city hall area and area west to Maple Street. Plan for removal of city hall structure improvements. Initiate demolition Q4 2027. Design planned improvements Q 3 2027 to Q3 2028
13a	East Zone Property Redevelopment or Disposition: Heart of Golden Project	Carly Lorentz, Steve Glueck	Q1 2027-Q4 2028	Council policy direction re future use of city parking lots east of East Street, Q1 and 2 2027. Begin implementation Q3 and 4 2027 – Q4 2029. Offer Annex building for sale Q1 2027, proceeds to be used for Heart of Golden projects.
14a	North Ford Complete Street Design	Matt Wempe	Q3 2026	Design for complete street (bike, pedestrian, transit and vehicle) improvements to North Ford Street (10th Street to SH93) and limited improvements to Tucker Gulch and Cressman Gulch Trails. The

				project team has been focused on the alternatives analysis process in 2025 with a preferred alternative open house scheduled for January 28. The preferred alternative will inform the 90% engineering design plans that will be developed in 2026. Once construction funding is identified, the design plans will be completed and submitted for CDOT approval (required as design has been federally funded, construction is expected to be grant-funded as well).
15a	**Forest Canopy Study**	**Kelsey Stansfield**	**Q2 2027**	**Complete a tree inventory study to document species, health, and condition of all public trees, providing a foundation for proactive maintenance, risk management, and reinvestment planning.**
16a	**Emerald Ash Borer Cost Share Program**	**Kelsey Stansfield**	**Q2 2026-ongoing**	**Develop a cost sharing program to assist residents with defray a portion of the costs of removal or treatment of Ash trees that are infested or will be infested by the Emerald Ash Borer. Trial program. Future funding to be determined pending trial success.**

Affordable and Thriving

Golden strives to reduce barriers to affordable living and nurture local business.

Strategic Action		Project Manager	Decision Point Timeframe	Key Contributors and Details
1b	Redevelop Ulysses Park	Jeremy Sweat	Q1 2026	Construction began Nov 2024, and completion will be in Q1 in 2026. The improvements include two multi-purpose fields with lighting, dog park relocation, playground equipment replacement, and updated building structures with improvements to restrooms and storage. The city will begin scheduling athletics in Q1 of 2026 and sporting events will begin by early March, weather permitting.
2b	Revising framework for Historic Preservation	Lauren Simmons	Q3 2026	Implement direction from the adopted Historic Preservation Policy Study Report to revise the Historic Preservation procedures (GMC CH. 18.58) in Q1, contextualize the existing historic districts, and create new Historic Preservation Design Guidelines in Q3.
3b	Tony Grampsas Park Improvements	Jeremy Sweat/ Anne Beierle	Q4 2026	Replace existing gravel access, lighting, and stormwater detention. Repair irrigation and landscaping near pickle ball courts. Evaluate improvements along Salvia near school to improve traffic and implement if budget allows. Construction to start first quarter 2026 and complete by fall 2026. Coordinated effort between Parks and Public Works with PW managing construction. Decision about Salvia may stretch to budget in 2027.
4b	Create and Adopt a Community Marketing Strategic Plan	Meredith Ritchie	Q4 2026	The Strategic Plan is aimed at aligning tourism communications and visitor engagement with community priorities by proactively managing visitor expectations during peak and non-peak seasons, special events, and disruptions.

Strategic Action		Project Manager	Decision Point Timeframe	Key Contributors and Details
1c	Complete Design and Construction of Park Facilities at South Neighborhood Property	Jeremy Sweat	Q4 2026-Q4 2028	The project area is focused on flood mitigation and archeological study over the next year. After we understand more about the area, the parks project will begin. The park will address a gap in level of service identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with a new neighborhood park.
2c	Implement Noise Mitigation	Sara Aupperle	Q2 2026	Construction of wall north of Hwy 58 and west of Washington in early 2026. Design efforts for next priorities (wall south of Hwy 58, berm east of Hwy 93 near Mitchel) is ongoing.
3c	Lena Gulch Drainage Project	Anne Beierle	Q4 2027	Improvements complete at Lena Gulch and Heritage Road. Other improvements in design. Construction for upper and lower reaches (above Heritage and below Zeta) to start in late 2027.
4c	Enhance work toward Equity Based Policing	Joe Harvey	Q4 2026	Work with consultants from The Center for Policing Equity has concluded with formal recommendations. All external equity-based changes have been completed. In 2026, internal equity process and policy changes will include: 2026 5-year strategic plan, promotional and special assignment selection process, corporal program, monthly investigative reporting, and disciplinary process analysis, evaluation and implementation of process changes.
5c	NLC Healthy Housing Project	Lauren McKinney	Q2 2026	Continue with healthy housing community education as needed. Partner with JCPH for radon testing and education annually. Working with a consultant to better understand Golden's rental housing stock.

6c	**Execute Year One of the Pesticide-free Park Program**	**Kelsey Stansfield**	**Q1 2025- Q1 2026**	**Staff will analyze results from the pilot program in January 2026. A report will be provided and/or presented to leadership in Q1 of 2026.**
7c	**Demonstrate Due Diligence to WCAG 2.2 AA Digital Accessibility Standards**	**Meredith Ritchie**	**Q4 2026**	**The City will continue strengthening WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility across all digital platforms, recognizing that digital assets are living documents and full compliance is an ongoing effort. Priorities include maintaining progress already achieved, improving remaining gaps—including on the Visit Golden website (Q3), remediating documents, and expanding staff access to easier accessibility tools (Q1).**
8c	**Create a City Display Policy**	**Sandra Llanes Carly Lorentz**	**Q4 2026**	**Research other communities' display policies and create a policy for Golden to help guide the process of community requested messaging on the Golden "Howdy Folks" banner. Specific requests could be brought forward for consideration following adoption of this administrative policy.**
9c	**Increase Summer Camp opportunities and childcare programs.**	**Jeremy Sweat**	**Q3 2025-Q3 2026**	**To better serve the needs of our community, we aim to significantly expand our program offerings. This includes developing engaging and enriching summer camp experiences, expanding our existing out-of-school camps, and restructuring our preschool to be a year-round (52-week) childcare and preschool center Beginning in 2026, we will launch after-care for preschool, along with full-day preschool care during the summer months. We will also offer drop-in care to support families as they transition from the traditional school-year preschool schedule into summer programming. In addition, we will open a licensed childcare summer camp at Tony Grampsas Park and Gym, adding 55 new seats, with registration scheduled to open in January 2026.**
10c	**Implement Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) Plan**	**Sarah Vaine**	**Q4 2026**	**The REDI Taskforce aims to continue increasing meaningful community engagement. An equity**

				assessment tool will be presented to City Boards and Commissions for potential use (Q2 2026). Complete M-Team retreat focused on shared values and equity-based solutions (Q1 2026). Engage in mini retreat for REDI Task Force to evaluate progress on the REDI Action Plan (Q4 2026).
11c	**Automated Vehicle Identification System Corridor "Photo Radar."**	**Joe Harvey**	**Q4 2026**	**Staff will analyze and evaluate the potential of creating an Automated Vehicle Identification System Corridor on Hwy 6, Hwy 93 and Hwy 58. Findings will be presented to City Council during a Study Session for the potential of implementation**.

Respected and Relational Governance

Golden builds trusted relationships through transparency, engagement, and collaboration locally and regionally.

	Strategic Action	Project Manager	Decision Point Timeframe	Key Contributors and Details
1d	Ethnography Projects	Nathan Ritchie	Q3 2025- Q4 2026	Continuation of work with the Native American Advisory Council. The second Indigenous Connection Summit will be hosted in April 2026.
2d	Emergency Management Training and Coordination	Joe Harvey	Q4 2026	In 2026, we will continue to collaborate regionally on developing evacuation plans, documentation, and training to identify and fill gaps to prepare for emergency situations. This process will stay focused at the management team level.
3d	Beverly Heights Emergency Egress Route Development	Scott Vargo	Q4 2026	Working with CDOT and CO School of Mines to apply for, design and develop an emergency egress route through Mines Park accessing Hwy. 6.
4d	Finalize Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Jefferson County Open Space	Jeremy Sweat	Q3 2026	Collaborate with Jefferson County Open Space to finalize an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) outlining responsibilities for trail and open space maintenance where appropriate.

Quality Services

Golden balances fiscal responsibility with creativity and innovation to fund and deliver quality public services today and in the future.

	Strategic Action	Lead Dept	Decision Point Timeframe	Key Contributors and Details
1e	Master Planning for Water Treatment and Water Rights	Anne Beierle	Q2 2026	Complete master plans for water treatment and long-term water rights/storage.
2e	Golden Fire Department Accreditation	Kasey Beal	Q2 2027	Complete accreditation by the Center for Fire Service Accreditation International (CFAI) to ensure our programs and metrics are validated externally against best practices nationally as our neighboring fire agencies have done (I.e. Fairmount, West Metro, South Metro, etc.).
3e	Implementation of Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Action Plan	Kasey Beal	Q1 2026	Community Risk Reduction Specialist to take the lead on this effort. A draft CRR approach is almost fully complete, and the data collection service will be fully implemented at the start of 2026
4e	Paramedic Program	Kasey Beal	Q4 2026	Establish compensation structure for Paramedics for consideration; initiate the procurement of Advanced Life Support Equipment, identify ongoing costs to train, retain and provide for continuing education (CE) of Paramedics. One of the new Battalion Chiefs is assigned as the EMS program manager.
5e	Police and Municipal Building: Heart of Golden	Carly Lorentz/ Steve Glueck	Q4 2027	Address municipal infrastructure needs for the future by implementing Phase 1 of the Heart of Golden Plan to complete construction of a sustainable Police and Municipal building. Construction began in 2025 Q3. Continues thru 2027 Q4.

6e	Creek Strategies	Carly Lorentz	Q3 2026	Continue to work towards a more balanced experience for residents and visitors. Council Subcommittee: Knecht & Evans.
7e	New Council Onboarding	Lisa Peterson	Q1 2026	Ensure a smooth process onboarding new council members.
8e	Adopt Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code	Kasey Beal	Q2 2026	We are in the process of adopting a Golden Wildfire Resiliency Code (WRC) based on the State's WRC and WUI Map. We have a Draft Map and Draft WRC, which will be presented to City Council during a February Study Session, with an adoption by the mandated April 1st, 2026 deadline and enforcement deadline of Jul 1st, 2026.
9e	Fossil Trace Pump Station	Anne Beierle	Q1 2026 –Q3 2026	A collaborative effort between Fossil Trace Golf Club and Public Works to build an irrigation pump house to supply non-potable water to Fossil Trace Golf Club, Golden Cemetery, Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center, and Ulysses Sports Fields. Design is at 60% as of December 2025 and will continue into 2026. Construction is anticipated to start Spring of 2026.
10e	Fossil Trace Golf Club Irrigation System Replacement	Jeremy Sweat	Q3 2026 – Q2 2027	Remove and replace the irrigation system at Fossil Trace Golf Club.
11e	Irrigation System Assessment	Kelsey Stansfield	Q3 2026	Conduct a full irrigation system assessment to identify aging infrastructure, improve water efficiency, and guide replacement schedules and capital investments.
12e	City-wide Facility Assessment	Kelsey Stansfield	Q4 2026	Complete a citywide facilities assessment to evaluate building conditions, prioritize repairs, and integrate findings into long-term capital and maintenance plans.
13e	Network Fiber Connection for Shops and Golf	Jonathan Morrison	Q4 2026	This fiber build will connect Catamount Shops, Golf Course & Splash to our existing city-owned fiber infrastructure for increased connectivity, speeds, and network resilience. This build will bring these locations “on-network”, connecting them directly back to City Hall

				and will eliminate our dependency on third-party internet service providers for connectivity to these locations.
14e	**Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update**	**Kasey Beal**	**Q4 2026**	**Golden's first CWPP was adopted in 2007 and last updated in 2022. The revised CWPP will complement the State of Colorado' recent WUI legislation, further integrate with Jefferson County's updated CWPP, and continue to encourage the development of Firewise Communities within Golden, which are predicated on enhancing defensible space through individual homeowners and homeowner associations.**